

WKU Sisterhood – Mid Year Report Small But Mighty Grant

Program Name: MCAT Prep Advantage Program

WKU Staff Member: Catherine Malin

Award Amount: \$4,250

Report Date: July 1, 2022

The Medical School Admissions Test (MCAT) is an extensive test that students must take to apply for medical school. It requires students to prepare for months in advance. Test prep materials and programs through organizations like Kaplan cost upwards of \$1,800, making them cost prohibitive for many students. The WKU Sisterhood funding enabled the South Central KY AHEC to purchase the Kaplan Self-Paced MCAT Prep materials for five students.

All five of the students identified as being from a rural and/or underserved area. These five students joined 13 other students for the AHEC MCAT Prep Advantage Program. In late November, program participants were registered for the Kaplan self-paced course and received access to their online materials and their prep books. They had an online program orientation on Thursday, December 2 with AHEC staff and a Kaplan representative. The Kaplan representative not only went over how to access the course materials, but also study tips, general MCAT information, and how to create a study schedule.

On January 22, 2022; the students participated in a full-length, practice MCAT test. The students took the proctored exam at the WKU Math Testing Center. The average score was a 494. This first exam gave students an idea of where their strengths were and where they need to focus their studying.

In February, the students attended part one of a two-part personal statement writing workshop. The personal statement is an important component to the medical school admission process. A well written personal statement can make the difference between being offered an interview and not. The one-hour workshop went over how to compose a personal statement and what should be included. The second part was held in March. During the second workshop, students learned how to edit their personal statements. Both workshops were led by Tara Kaprowy with Sway Essay.

In March and April, students participated in a mock medical school interview with the AHEC staff. For many students, the medical school interview is their first interview, and they often find it intimidating. The goal of the mock interview is to help them gain confidence and skill in telling their story. During the mock interview, we also went over key questions that they will be asked, how to dress for their interview, virtual vs. in-person interviewing etiquette, and the different types of interviews done at medical schools (traditional vs. multi mini interviews). Each mock interview lasted about an hour.

In early May, students took their second mandatory full-length practice exam. Due to staffing issues, the students were not able to use the Math Testing Center. Instead, students were instructed to take the exam at homes, in a simulated testing environment. The inability to proctor the exam, did result in several students not completing the second practice exam. Of the students who did, however, their exam scores went up. The average was a 502.

The students are currently in the process of applying for medical school. The applications opened in June.